Sparrow population

2111. DR. C. NARAYANA REDDY: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that a study was conducted in London on the decline of sparrow population;

(b) whether it is a fact that sparrow population is decreasing in India also; and

(c) if so, what steps Government propose to check the decline?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a)Yes Sir.

(b) Bombay Natural History Society has reported a decline in house sparrow population in certain cities of the country. This is due to rapid urbanization and consequent loss of habitat as well as loss of nesting material in these cities. However, the sparrow population is still widely distributed and there is no immediate threat to its existence.

(c) Large scale afforestation activities in urban and rural areas improve the availability of habitat of various bird species including sparrow.

Environmental Degradation

2112. PROF. (SHRIMATI) BHARATI RAY: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that liberalisation has aggravated the problems of environmental degradation, deforestation, soil erosion, pollution of air and water resources, dumping of imported toxic industrial wastes in the country; and

(b) if so, what steps Government have taken to ensure well-being and livelihood of the people?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) The environmental norms/requirements have not been relaxed although the procedure for licensing/permit has been liberalised. As such there is no evidence of environmental degradation due to liberalisation.

(b) Various steps taken by the Government to control pollution and ensure the well-being of the people, include the following:—

- Effluent and Emission standards have been notified under the Environment (Protection) Act for polluting industries. Besides, standards for ambient air and water quality have also been notified.